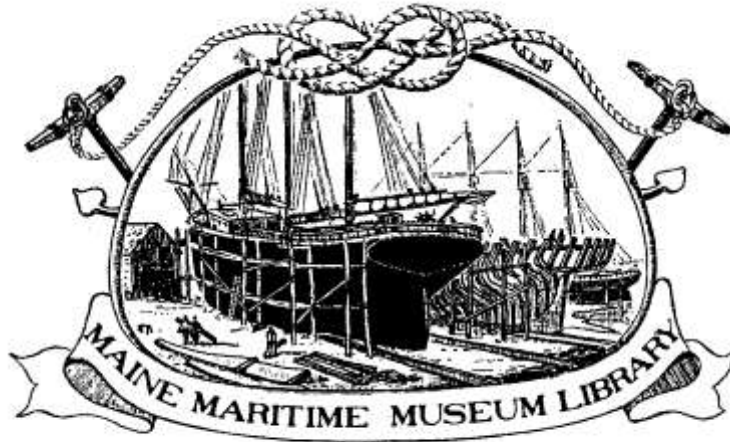


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**Inventory for
Manuscript Collection
MS-380**

**Benjamin Titcomb Shipping Papers
Inclusive dates: n.d., 1763-1782**

by
Tracy Lamaestra
September 2012

Shelf feet: .25 linear feet
Number of boxes: 1
Accession nos. 2005.2.1

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Abstract

Titcomb, Benjamin (b. 1726-d. 1798)

Shipping papers, n.d., 1763-1782

1 half-size box, (.25 Shelf feet)

Eighteenth-century shipping merchant and ship owner from Portland, Maine.

Includes correspondence and general account records for Titcomb's shipping business.

Vessel papers for the *Cumberland* (Vessel type unknown), *Endeavor* (Sloop), *Lively* (Sloop), *Union* (Sloop) and the *Hawk* and *Fame* (Vessel types unknown) includes one account summary, one bill of sale, a receipt, and crewmen wages. The papers grouped into two series: Series I.

General Shipping business and Series II. Vessel papers.

Purchase from Dan Casavant Rare Books, 2005.

MS-380. Accession No. 2005.2.1

Finding aid available in repository; folder-level control.

Added entries—persons:

Titcomb, Andrew

Titcomb, Benjamin

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

Cumberland (Vessel type unknown)

Endeavor (Sloop)

Hawk (Vessel type unknown)

Fame (Vessel type unknown)

Lively (Sloop)

Union (Sloop)

Added entries—places:

Portland (ME)

Added entries—key terms:

Accounts

Bills of sale

Freight and freightage

Letters

Lumber trade

Rum

Ship captains

Shipping

Sugar trade

Wages

Acquisition

The Benjamin Titcomb shipping papers were purchased from Dan Casavant Rare Books on January 6, 2005 with funds donated for the purpose by Charles E. Burden, accession no. 2005.2.1.

Provenance

It is unknown at this time where Dan Casavant Rare Books acquired the Benjamin Titcomb shipping papers.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on the use of these materials for study or research.

Physical Condition

The sleeved papers were loosely organized in an archival box. Descriptive information for each document was written on a label and adhered to each sleeve. Manuscripts are late eighteenth-century documents on cotton rag paper. Many have stains either caused indirectly by migration from other materials or directly by ink or water-based substances. Some documents have extreme surface dirt, as well as creases or tears on edges or fold lines. Those with heavier crease lines were gently flattened with a tacking iron at low to medium heat. A number of manuscripts have small missing pieces.

Processing Notes

The papers came chronologically organized by the seller. All papers were already sleeved and labeled with information. Papers were left sleeved and organized into two series—general shipping business and vessel related papers. Papers follows a standardized sequence to simplify access.

General shipping business papers could not be linked to any specific vessel. They were chronologically organized by creation date. Vessel papers are alphabetically arranged and then chronologically organized by creation date. An appendix was created of captain's names that appeared in the collection.

Biographical Notes

Benjamin Titcomb

Benjamin Titcomb was born on January 14, 1726 in Newbury, Massachusetts to Joseph Titcomb (b. 1698-d. 1779) and Anne S. Smith (b. 1706-d. 1763). He married Anne Pearson (b. 1729-d. 1800) in Standish, Maine in 1753.¹ Anne Pearson was his cousin. She was the daughter of Joseph Titcomb's sister Sarah Titcomb Pearson.² They had children Eunice (b. 1750-d. 1798), Andrew Philips (b. 1754-d. 1818), Moses (b. 1755), Joseph (b. 1757-d. 1836), Benjamin (b. 1761-d. 1848), Anne (b. 1763), Henry (b. 1766-d. 1829), William (b. 1767-d. 1786) and Mary (b. 1769).¹

Benjamin Titcomb was involved at the siege of Louisburg as an ensign at about twenty years of age. In 1746 he came to Portland, Maine at the prompting of Moses Pearson. Titcomb was a blacksmith by trade. After he married Anne the daughter of Moses Pearson in 1753, they built a house on the corner of Plum and Middle Streets in Portland. This is where the Falmouth Hotel later stood. He had a blacksmith shop on the breast-work from Central Wharf.³

Benjamin Titcomb was a ship merchant as well. He corresponded with captains, ship brokers and ship agents concerning shipments. Titcomb also arranged for the repair of vessels. This was for smaller vessels such as sloops. Vessels were the *Cumberland* (Vessel type unknown), *Endeavor* (Sloop), *Lively* (Sloop), *Union* (Sloop) and the *Hawk* and *[Fame]* (Vessel types unknown). He procured shipments to Falmouth from Boston and St. Eustatius. Vessels voyaged to Demerara, Antigua, London, Piscataqua, Portsmouth and Baltimore for cargo. He had a particular interest in the West Indies. Cargos included sugar, molasses, rum, coffee, lime, lumber, paper, staves, cord wood, clams, shingles, fish, spars, pork and bread. Titcomb was also a ship owner. In 1763, he purchased the sloop *Endeavor* with Samuel Lowell for one hundred and six pounds, thirteen shillings and four lawful money from Nathaniel Blanchard.⁴ In the *New England Family History: A Magazine Devoted to the History of Families of Maine and Massachusetts* it is recorded that one of his ships carried some:

*“[negros] as frait from the island of St. Eustatius to Baltimore, the master of the ship paying the charges and duties on the frait.”*²

Moreover, Titcomb was a militia captain fourth in command under James Sullivan. After the burning of Falmouth by the British fleet under the command of Henry Mowatt on October 18, 1775, Titcomb sustained a loss of £316 19s.¹ He was co-owner of the privateer *Fox* (Ship) with John Fox and others, which captured a letter of marque of 18 guns with a valuable cargo. This vessel was taken to Boston where the arms and equipment were confiscated for use.⁵

He was chosen Deacon of the First Parish Church in 1769 and became known as “Deacon Benjamin Titcomb.” He was also a selectman of Falmouth (Portland) for three years. In 1784, he became a representative with Joseph Noyes to the General Court.³ He was also a member of the Committee of Safety at Falmouth and member of the Committee of Correspondence and Inspection. Titcomb died on October 15, 1798 in Stroudwater, Maine at seventy-two.¹ He left a valuable estate of £10,000. This included a tract of land of three acres extending from Congress Street to Back Cove just below the meeting house of the First Parish Church. His wife died on July 8, 1800.²

His son, Benjamin Titcomb Jr., was a printer and co-publisher of the first newspaper in Maine. He was a partner with Thomas B. Wait. At 23 years of age, Titcomb Jr. printed the

Falmouth Gazette and Weekly Advisor. Not only was this the first newspaper printed in Maine, but it was the first piece of paper printed at the first printing office in the state. The paper was published once a week by Titcomb Jr. and Wait. This partnership with Wait dissolved after about a year. Titcomb Jr. continued to publish until 1798. He later became ordained as a Baptist preacher and changed his career. Titcomb Jr. became a preacher of the Baptist Church in Brunswick. He was also elected a delegate to the convention that formed the Constitution of Maine. He was an original trustee of Waterville College, now Colby College. He retired at 83 and then died at his home in Brunswick on September 30, 1848 at the age of 87.⁷ He is buried in Pine Grove Cemetery in Brunswick, Maine.¹

Another son of Titcomb Sr., Joseph Titcomb, was an active shipmaster and commanded a large privateer out of Portland during the Revolution. He was also ten years a selectman and nine years a representative of the town to the General Court.³ Joseph died on August 6, 1836.¹

References cited:

1. www.ancestry.com and <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com>.
2. Quinby, Henry Cole. *New England Family History: A Magazine Devoted to the History of Families of Maine and Massachusetts*. Vol. 2. New York: Henry Cole Quinby, 1908-1909. eBook.
3. Willis, William. *The History of Portland: A Facsimile of the 1865 Edition with a New Forward by Gerald Morris*. Portland: Maine Historical Society, 1972.
4. MS-380. Folder 4. *Endeavor* (Sloop), Bill of Sale, 1763.
5. Willis, William. *History of Portland from its First Settlement with Notices of Neighboring Towns, and of the Changes of Government in Two Parts*. Part II. Portland, Maine: Charles and Day, 1833.
6. Wheeler, George Augustus and Henry Warren Wheeling. *History of Brunswick, Topsham and Harpswell, Maine*. Boston: Alfred Mudge and Sons, 1878.
7. "Maine's First Printer: Rev. Benjamin Titcomb." Pine Grove Cemetery of Brunswick Maine. Pejepscot Historical Society. On-line source. 26 September 2012.

Scope and Content

This is a small collection of eighteenth-century shipping and vessel papers of Benjamin Titcomb Sr. There are general shipping papers of incoming letters and accounts general. These cannot be linked to any particular vessel. There are only two incoming letters to Titcomb about cargo. In accounts general, are receipts and bills written by him to individuals for imported merchandise via vessels or for particular work on a vessel. A single receipt dated May 16, 1786 was addressed to Andrew Titcomb the son of Benjamin Titcomb Sr. for boards (folder 2). Vessel papers include the *Cumberland* (Vessel type unknown), *Endeavor* (Sloop), *Lively* (Sloop), *Union* (Sloop) and the *Hawk* and *Fame* (Vessel types unknown). Vessel records include an account summary, bill of sale, accounts general and crew wages.

Series Description

Series I. General shipping business (n.d., 1761-1782): Incoming correspondence and accounts general (receipts and bills).

Series II. Vessel papers (1761-1771): Vessel papers for the *Cumberland* (Vessel type unknown), *Endeavor* (Sloop), *Lively* (Sloop), *Union* (Sloop) and the *Hawk* and *Fame* (Vessel types unknown). These include an account summary, bill of sale, accounts general and crew wages.

MS-380 Benjamin Titcomb Shipping Papers Container List

Box# Folder#

Series I. General shipping business

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | 1 | Correspondence, incoming 1761, 1774 |
| | 2 | Accounts, general, n.d., 1765-1782 |

Series II. Vessel papers

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3 | <i>Cumberland</i> (Vessel type unknown)
Account summary, 1771 |
| 4 | <i>Endeavor</i> (Sloop)
Bill of sale, 1763 |
| 5 | <i>Hawk</i> and <i>Fame</i> (Vessel types unknown)
Accounts general, receipted dated 1772 |
| 6 | <i>Lively</i> (Sloop)
Accounts, crew wages, 1761 |
| 7 | <i>Union</i> (Sloop)
Accounts, general, receipt dated 1765 |

Appendix: MS-380 Benjamin Titcomb Shipping Papers
Index of Captain's names with corresponding folders

Captain's Names	Corresponding Folder(s)
Armstrong, Jonathan	2
Gooding, James	2
Jones, Ephraim	1, 2
Jones, P.	1
Moody, Joshua	2
Stephenson	2
Stickney, Jacob	2
Stone, Joshua	1, 2
Waite, Captain	6
Wilridges	2